

TOUGHER (S.) *Julian the Apostate*. Pp. xviii + 201, ills, maps. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007. Paper, £19.99 (Cased, £60). ISBN: 978-0-7486-1887-3 (978-0-7486-1886-6 hbk).

doi:10.1017/S0009840X11002058

This is the second volume of 'Debates and Documents in Ancient History', a series which tries to 'provide up-to-date and accessible accounts of the historical issues and problems raised by each topic written by expert academics' (p. viii).

Part 1 (Debates) opens with a survey of sources; other chapters cover 'Family', 'Conversion', 'Gaul', Julian's 'Imperial Style', 'Religion' and 'Persia'. A short meditation 'The Elusiveness of Julian' ends this section.

Part 1 contains cross-references to Part 2 (Documents): a selection of Julian's writings, Claudius Mamertinus' *gratiarum actio* (362), Libanius, Gregory of Nazianzus' *inunctiones*, Ephrem the Syrian's hymns, Ammianus, Eunapius, Zosimus, etc.; excerpts from the *Theodosian Code*, four inscriptions, three coins, a picture of the statue of Julian at the Louvre, and E. Armitage's painting 'Julian the Apostate Presiding at a Conference of Sectarians' (1874). There are a family tree of the Emperor, three maps of the Empire, a Chronology, a list of 'Further reading' by chapters, a collection of 'essay questions and exercise topics', and a Bibliography including a list of Internet resources.

Written in a lively and stimulating style, the book is an admirable general approach to Julian and his reign; it raises many of the principal questions but provides fewer answers than a reader could expect. The conflict between Paganism and Christianity eclipses other possible viewpoints. Particularly enjoyable are 'Gaul', 'The Realities of Power' and 'Persia'; more speculative and more complex debates, for example on the nature of the Emperor's beliefs, need greater clarity.

In this book many voices can be heard, but Julian's hardly features. To T. even the Emperor's own writings are of no value in gauging his psychology (p. 10). He omits essential issues for understanding the evolution of Julian's thought, such as the idea of 'good king' and the search for 'Platonic virtue' that pervades almost all the *orationes* before 361 and reappears in *Misopogon* (see e.g. P. Huart, 'Julien et l'hellénisme, idées morales et politiques', in R. Braun and J. Richer [edd.], *L'Empereur Julien. De l'histoire à la légende* (331–1715), 1978, pp. 99–123); T. also disregards the evolution of Julian's self-representation in official propaganda, *Letter to the Athenians*, inscriptions, coins, and Latin and Greek public speeches (I. Labriola, 'Direttive della propaganda dell'imperatore Giuliano', *VVA.A. Il Giuliano l'Apostata di Augusto Rostagni*, 1983, pp. 57–73; J. Arce, *Estudios sobre el Emperador Fl. Cl. Juliano: fuentes literarias, epigrafía, numismática*, 1984; H.U. Wiemer, *Libanios und Julian: Studien zum Verhältnis von Rhetorik und Politik im vierten Jahrhundert n. Chr.*, 1995). The useful section on documents could have been improved substantially by modern instead of nineteenth-century translations. Some notable absences in the bibliography have already been pointed out. There is a clear tendency to privilege Anglo-Saxon critics.

This is an inspiring book which fulfils expectations; conscientious readers should however complete their knowledge by reading Latin and Greek sources and existing bibliography in languages other than English.

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WEINBERG (G.D.), STERN (E.M.) *The Athenian Agora. Results of Excavations Conducted by The American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Volume XXXIV. Vessel Glass*. Pp. xxxiv + 214, figs, ills, maps, pls. Princeton: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 2009. Cased, £100, US\$150. ISBN: 978-0-87661-234-7.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X1100206X

This project, co-authored by two experts with a vast knowledge of glass, deals with the glass vessels excavated between 1931 and 1972. The manuscript was completed in 2002 and the long delay in publishing the book has had a somewhat detrimental effect.

The book is very well put together. The Introduction provides an overview of the periods (classical period to medieval/post-medieval times) by which the glass is presented. This method was chosen because, among other things, there were two pivotal moments in the history of the Agora: the sack of the city by Sulla in 86 B.C. and the Herulian raid of A.D. 267. The former, however, left only indistinct traces in the contexts presented here. The overview of the individual periods deals both with the use of glass vessels in the Agora in general and with special vessels in particular and attempts to highlight their significance with regard to the history of ancient glass. Since the Agora was an important location, the glass vessels discovered there may stimulate discussion thanks to their firm chronological positioning.

There follows a description of the contexts and selected deposits. The problems linked with excavating over many years with various researchers using different approaches as well as the storage and inventorying of numerous finds are dealt with. The basic problem with stratigraphies in Mediterranean excavations, however, is not touched upon. A city like Athens, where construction was constantly ongoing, is very challenging to excavate. Wells used from the Hellenistic period to late antiquity cannot really be viewed as 'uncontaminated' contexts despite the fact that they contain layered deposits. In order to understand the contexts that contained large amounts of glass, e.g. context B 17:1 (pp. 11–12), it would have been helpful to include illustrations such as plans and section drawings from the excavation records. Also, as not all archaeologists are familiar with 'Group M', it might have been easier to follow the reasons given for the date of layer XII from that context (p. 14) if illustrations of the decisive pottery had been included. Moreover, it would have been important to know whether the layer was dated to the end of the second half of the fifth century or rather to the beginning, particularly in view of the fact that numerous glass artefacts from that layer indicate a sixth-century date. Since other layers are dated almost to the year, one would like to know why this was not done here. Where a context is used as proof for the dating of a particular type of glass vessel, its stratigraphical position really must be firmly secured.

The overview of the periods and the contexts is followed by detailed descriptions of the individual groups of vessels used during the different periods and by an extensive catalogue. Here, the authors' vast experience comes to the fore and hardly anything is omitted: the history of the individual shapes, the techniques used, their distribution throughout east and west, details of the rim shapes which provide chronological clues, and much more. Several parallel finds are listed but with an emphasis on the neighbouring Mediterranean region. The variety seems somewhat confusing at times, and some of the parallel finds originate from far-flung regions or are chosen too eclectically. Caution is advised with regard to the links with individual pottery shapes and decorations, as the pottery selected is rarely very well represented or often found, so the examples do not appear to be the most obvious models; moreover, their chronology plays an important role. The often-cited samian beakers with cut-glass decorations, for instance, were fashionable at a time (second half of the second century to early third century) when hardly any faceted glass beakers were in circulation (p. 94 n. 121); in addition, the motifs were completely different. Decorations with indents did *not* occur simultaneously on pottery and glass (p. 47). Thin-walled beakers with indents were uncommon shapes. A mere four examples with indents that fit chronologically were found in Cosa, while in the northern provinces ceramic beakers with indents were not more widely circulated until *after* the glass varieties came into fashion.

Overall, the book contains a wealth of knowledge on various subjects linked to glass vessels and it is a welcome addition to the not exactly abundant catalogue of literature on glass from Greece and the eastern Mediterranean region.¹

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